

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

There are shows that report the "news" inaccurately or with a bipartisan spin, but they inform the public that their news is fake regularly so that no one is confused on what is fact and what is fiction. These big media monopolies are threatening our democracy by controlling an amalgamation of TV channels and running these channels like a dictatorship. If the Sinclair group is allowed to have absolute media authority without regulations and without ethics, the effect would be a totalitarian control over the flow of information received by the public. As described by Encarta, the Sinclair group would become "a single party without opposition rules over political, economic, social, and cultural life" in the media sphere. So, the Sinclair group does not control all TV channels and there are regulations in place to ensure that only 2 out of 3 local news channels are homogenous and dictatorial; but what happens when one corporation is allowed to broadcast any viewpoint or belief, no matter if it is fact or fiction or even grossly exaggerated? All other influential dictatorial corporations have a pass to impregnate the public with their viewpoints and beliefs (or at least those values which are determined by their wealthy managers) by calling these lies the "news".

This is not democracy. How will we ever trust any media again if there are no checks and balances in place? This is even worse than their original proposal to just outright brainwash the public with a sickening display of hateful, destructive, slander. They now wish to hide under the canopy of "news" and present biased information veiled under a halo. I, personally, have lost hope in there ever being "unbiased" news and I now turn to the "Daily Show" with Jon Stewart for my news because at least they are being upfront in telling me that they are fake and biased. I keep hope that one day all of the local, national and global news coverage will be presented by local news professionals on a plethora of local channels so that diversity, which is so important to a healthy democracy, can survive; instead of subliminal values being impressed upon us by "fair and balanced" corporations who are anything but. I believe in the freedom of speech, but this is more a matter of a public service forcing their beliefs on the public, which is unlawful and unethical.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.